

GREAT LAKES LEVELS

UPDATE No. 58

MAY 1, 1990

Precipitation in the Great Lakes basin was above average in April. Again, it was a month of wide variation. The Lakes Michigan-Huron basin had below average rainfall at 84% of average. The Lakes Superior, Erie and Ontario basins were wetter than average at 110%, 103% and 139%, respectively. The following tables show estimated precipitation for April and for the year to date.

Provisional Great Lakes Precipitation (inches)

I. April

Basin	1990*	1900-89 Average	Diff.	% of Ave.
Superior	2.2	2.0	+0.2	110%
Mich-Huron	2.1	2.5	-0.4	84%
Erie	3.2	3.1	+0.1	103%
Ontario	3.9	2.8	+1.1	139%
Great Lakes	2.5	2.5	0	100%

II. Year to Date

Basin	1990*	1900-89 Average	Diff.	% of Ave.
Superior	7.1	7.0	+0.1	101%
Mich-Huron	8.2	8.4	-0.2	98%
Erie	12.9	10.2	+2.7	126%
Ontario	12.4	10.5	+1.9	118%
Great Lakes	9.0	8.6	+0.4	105%

* Estimated

During the past 12 months, total precipitation on the Great Lakes basin has been near average. Lake Superior has accumulated about 2.1 inches (7%) below average precipitation; Lakes Mich-Huron had total precipitation of about 2.5 inches (8%) below average. The lower Great Lakes, Erie and Ontario, have both accumulated above average precipitation -- about 5.1 inches (15%) and 5.2 inches (15%), respectively.

The National Weather Service is forecasting below-average precipitation during May for the Lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron basins and near-average for the Lakes Erie and Ontario basins. May's temperature forecast is for near-average throughout the Great Lakes basin, except Lake Ontario where above-average is expected.

The water levels of Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron continue to be well below average for this time of year. Lakes St. Clair and Erie rose slightly in April and continued above average. Lake Ontario levels rose about 9 inches to continue well above average in April. The Great Lakes are in their seasonal rise towards their summer highs.

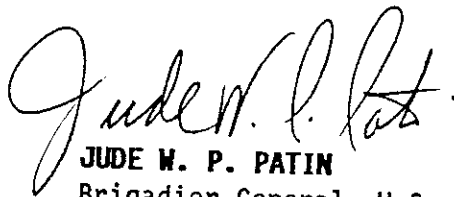
It has been 4 months since I last discussed the International Joint Commission (IJC) Reference Study on Great Lakes Water Levels. Much has happened; much more is and will be happening as the Phase II study gains momentum. (For our new readers, the Study is to examine and report upon the methods of alleviating the adverse consequences of fluctuating Great Lakes water levels.)

In February 1990, the IJC approved a Directive for Phase II which will include an 11-member Study Board. The Corps of Engineers will serve as chair of the U.S. Section of the Board. Other U.S. members are Mr. Cliff Sasfy of the International Great Lakes Coalition; Mr. Neil Fulton from the State of Illinois' Division of Water Resources; and Mr. Joseph Hoffman from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. The Canadian Section of the Study Board is chaired by Mr. Tony

Wagner of Environment Canada's Ontario Region. He will be joined by Mr. Maurice Lewis of the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources; Mr. Andre Harvey of Quebec's Ministry of Environment; and Mr. Philip Weller of Great Lakes United. Two other Board members will be elected by the Citizens Advisory Committee to serve on the Study Board. The eleventh Board member, the Study Director, is expected to be named shortly.

The Board is preparing a Plan of Study (POS) for submission to the IJC later this month. The POS will propose a study organization, an estimated budget, and an outline of the tasks to be addressed in the Phase II Study. Presently, there are five basic objectives for the Phase II Study: 1) establish principles to assist

Governments in dealing with fluctuating water levels; 2) 10 short-term support studies in such areas as erosion, damage potential, and lake regulation; 3) evaluate a range of measures for several sites around the basin; 4) public communication strategy; and, 5) implementation strategy. I will be providing you with periodic updates on this subject as the Study unfolds.



JUDE W. P. PATIN

Brigadier General, U.S. Army
Commander and Division Engineer